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Form 10-300 (July 1969)

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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HENRY COALTER CABELL HOUSE- Architectural Description

Though originally an ell-shaped Greek Revival house, the Henry Coalter house has been added to in subsequent years until it now presents a mixture of Greek and later nineteenth century revival styles.

From the front, the house is composed of a large central section with two-story portico, flanked by two smaller wings. The portice is the most remarkable feature of the house for it is supported by four columns with "Egyptian" lotus flower capitals, which bear a strong resemblance to one pictured in Plate 11 of Minard Lafever's 1835 edition of The Beauties of Modern Architecture. There is no pediment on the portico.

Just below the second floor windows of this central portion is a balcony with an elaborate floral-patterned iron railing, thought to have been added about 1880. The double entrance door in the bottom left-hand corner of the facade contains early etched glass panels and iron gates. The five, large, one-over-one double hung windows have flat stone lintels, now painted light grey to match the rest of the house, and black stone sills

There are two window units in each of the two-story wings to either side of the central section of the facade. The original first floor windows were replaced later in the nineteenth century by triple bays, decorated with pilasters and a dentil moulding. The second floor windows are double-arched units, crowned by two scroll-like ornaments ending in a central bonnet with a rosette. This design is less elaborate, but similar in feeling to that found in Minard Lafever's Plate 1 of The Beauties of Modern Architecture (1835 edition).

The whole entrance facade is brick veneer with thin joints and is crowned by a dentiled cornice. The metal roof is not visible.

There are twenty windows on the southwest facade of the Cabell house, all are double-hung one-over-one, and all but four have shutters. Eight windows are part of the original house while the other twelve belong to the later 1948 addition. The first floor windows are larger than the basement and second story windows, which are the same size. All but two of the original windows have flat stone lintels and sills with white frames while the wing windows have brick sills, no lintels, and white frames.

In the back of the building (the northwest facade), a remnant of the original kitchen wing is visible to the left of the later addition. Two windows have been bricked up in the older portion, while a door and one small window above it still exist.

The back of the new wing has two "picture" windows on the firs and second floor levels, a large central door of "modern" design with iron work around it, and other various-sized windows, one with shutters. All are framed in white with brick sills and are double-hung one-over-one. The brickwork is five course American bond, and the cornice is continued.

Form 10-300a (July 1969) UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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The northeast facade now overlooks a parking lot. The wing of the main body of the house is joined by a small brick section to what was originally the kitchen. The two windows in the wing still retain their flat stone lintels and sills. While two windows in the kitchen wing have been bricked up, the other windows appear to have undergone changes since some are double hung six-over-six, as opposed to being one-over-one like their earlier counterparts. The connecting addition has two windows and a cornice that is diminished in comparison to those of the sections on either side of it. The wing of the main house is brick veneer with fine joints, while the five course American bond of the small, central section forms a transition to the more irregular nine, ten, and eleven course American bonding in the kitchen wing.

Nothing remains of the original interior of the Coalter Cabell house. When the wing was added in 1948, the inside of the house was totally removed and replaced with new partitions, conveniences, and furnishings. According to Miss Mary Wingfield Scott, a noted authority on Richmond architecture, the original interior trim lacked the refinement of that in houses built in Richmond in this period. She says that a need for economy on the part of the owner may have caused the work to be carried out by a less-skilled contractor.

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SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applica	blo and Known) 1847	- date of construc	tion
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HENRY COALTER CABELL HOUSE- Significance

Though the house at 116 South Third bears the name of Henry Coalter Cabell, it was actually built by William O. George in 1847 and rented by Mr. Cabell for three decades during the 1850's. Colonel Cabell's death, the house went to John G. Spotts, a wholesale grocer, who added the present bay windows on the lower floor. Spotts, the house was owned by the John S. Elletts. From 1923-1924, it served as the office of the State Department of Education. In 1938, the Universal Life Insurance Co. bought the house and adapted the interior for This firm was the first to utilize an historic house for its headquarters without disfiguring changes. Shortly afterwards, Universal came under the auspices of the Atlantic Life Insurance Co. which executed an extensive remodelling program in 1947-1948. The interior was completely razed, and a two-story wing was added in the ell between The Virginia Education Association has the main house and the kitchen. owned and occupied the house since 1951. Prior to its Centennial celebration in 1963, the V.E.A. redecorated its offices, and then in 1967-1968, new heating and air conditioning facilities were installed, as well as an elevator.

The most distinguished resident of 116 South Third was Henry Coalter Cabell, son of Governor William H. Cabell, and a Confederate veteran and leading member of the Richmond Bar.

The Cabell House is important among Richmond's architectural Its "Egyptian" portico is the only one of its style in the landmarks. city with the exception of those on the "Egyptian Building" of the Medical College of Virginia. The house is also sole survivor of several blocks of distinguished houses that made Gamble's Hill one of Richmond's most fashionable neighborhoods in the late nineteenth century. The saving of the Cabell house through its adaptation to business use set an important example for preservation in Richmond.

12.	MAJOR	BIBLIOG	RAPHICAL RE	FERENCES								
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	Old Richmond Neighborhoods, Mary Wingfield Scott											
1	Richmond Homes and Memories, Robert Munford											
1	Files of Valentine Museum Houses, Richmond: Third Street											
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